



California Energy  
Commission



California Department  
of Fish and Game



U.S. Bureau of  
Land Management



U.S. Fish and  
Wildlife Service

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## **State, Federal Agencies Release Interim Document on Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan**

Sacramento, California - State and federal agencies have released an interim document on a plan that will protect important desert habitat and identify low conflict lands for renewable energy development in the California desert.

The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) is an unprecedented collaboration among local, state and federal agencies to streamline renewable energy project and transmission line permitting while conserving biological and natural resources in the California desert.

When completed, the DRECP is likely to be the most significant conservation effort in the desert in the last two decades. It will identify up to 8.5 million acres of the California desert for potential conservation, while strengthening and enhancing special recreation areas and identifying the areas for developing solar, wind and geothermal projects with the least environmental impact.

“The DRECP will identify the places in the desert where solar, wind and geothermal projects would have the least environmental impact,” said DRECP Director David Harlow. “By analyzing the desert from a landscape level perspective, we believe we can site enough projects to meet our renewable energy goals for the next several decades, with impacts to between 200,000 to 350,000 acres of the California desert – less than two percent of the Plan Area.”

The DRECP is being prepared by the Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT), a collaborative effort among the California Energy Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The interim document released is called the Description and Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives and is in response to calls from stakeholders for another opportunity to review the plan and provide input before the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIS/EIR). The document includes a description and evaluation of six draft alternatives and a no-action alternative. The alternatives in the interim document reflect various

combinations of development and conservation approaches. The agencies will use input received to help shape the Draft EIS/EIR, due out next summer.

Input can be provided through the DRECP website at [www.drecp.org](http://www.drecp.org) and will be accepted throughout the DRECP planning process. Members of the public can also sign up on the website to receive updates on the plan via the DRECP listserve. To be most useful and fully considered prior to publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, input on the interim document should be submitted by January 23, 2013.

The interim document and a fact sheet about it can be found at <http://www.drecp.org/documents/>

### About the DRECP

The DRECP is intended to be a Natural Communities Conservation Plan and a Habitat Conservation Plan under state and federal endangered species and natural communities conservation laws. It may also include a Bureau of Land Management Land Use Plan Amendment. When completed, the DRECP will be an effective biological mitigation and conservation program and provide renewable project developers with more regulatory certainty for their solar, wind, or geothermal projects.

The DRECP is focused on the desert regions and adjacent lands of seven California counties - Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego. Approximately 22.5 million acres of federal and non-federal California desert land are in the DRECP planning area.

The REAT agencies receive input from the DRECP stakeholder committee on the development of the DRECP. The committee includes local governments in the desert regions, renewable energy developers, environmental and nongovernmental organizations, recreation organizations, a Native American renewable energy organization, and electric utilities. State and federal agencies also participate in stakeholder committee meetings.

More information about the DRECP can be found at [www.drecp.org](http://www.drecp.org) or by contacting David Harlow ([david.harlow@energy.ca.gov](mailto:david.harlow@energy.ca.gov)) at 916-335-8179 or Chris Beale ([cbeale@resourceslawgroup.com](mailto:cbeale@resourceslawgroup.com)) at 916-451-1123.

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